



# The Squeaky Wheel

www.sacbike.org

Newsletter of the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates

December 2002

## From the Chair Some Decision- Makers are *Finally* Getting the Message

by *Lea Brooks*

Advocating for more, safer and convenient bicycle and pedestrian facilities is hard work. In a nation and state where automobiles — and more recently sport utility vehicles and mammoth pickup trucks — rule, it sometimes seems like our needs are not taken seriously by decision-makers.

When we started SABA in 1991, we were optimistic that our efforts would make a positive difference for bicyclists in the Sacramento area and statewide. Our list of achievements is long. Although we have suffered setbacks, our tenacity and passion have paid off.

This payoff was most recently reflected in a unanimous decision by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors on November 26 to support an innovative and mold-breaking design for a freeway interchange at Highway 50 at Watt Avenue. The interchange is part of the South Watt Area Transportation Study (SWATS), which looked at ways to reduce traffic congestion on Watt Avenue from La Riviera Drive south to Keifer Boulevard. SWATS includes the light rail crossing of Watt Avenue, the intersection of Folsom Boulevard and Watt Avenue, and the Highway 50 interchange at Watt Avenue.

SWATS results will be implemented in phases, with light rail tracks over Watt Avenue scheduled for construction in 2005, followed by the interchange reconfiguration in 2007.

County transportation staff candidly described the project as the county's first attempt to truly accommodate all forms of

## New SABA T-shirt

SABA has brighter, snazzier T-shirts. Thanks to a slick design from JHME Advertising, done generously on a pro bono basis, and assistance from SABA volunteer Brett Budolfson, T-shirts are now in stock.

The shirts have the SABA logo in blue as a crest in front. On the back, there's a large capitol dome made of bike parts in orange, blue and black. The shirts are 100 percent cotton "natural" color Hanes Beefy-T's. Sizes available are S, M, L and XL.



If you want one of your own, send a check for \$12 to:

SABA  
PO Box 1295  
Sacramento, CA 95812-1295

You may also order shirts when you renew your membership or use the form on the SABA Web site — where we plan to put a color version of the design.

For those who ordered shirts months ago, but didn't receive anything (because we were out of the old design in most sizes), you should now have a shirt. Thanks for your patience. ☺

## SACOG Bicycle/ Pedestrian Notes

by *Walt Seifert*

The following are highlights of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Group meeting on November 19:

**City of Sacramento.** Received a \$450,000 Safe Routes to School grant for the Taylor Street School at Taylor and Bell Streets. Currently many students must walk in the streets to get to school as there are no sidewalks, curbs or gutters.

**Sacramento County.** Plans comprehensive update to the Bikeway Master Plan in late 2003. Working on bike lane projects on Stockton Boulevard, Franklin Boulevard and Sunset Avenue. Acquired property in Rio Linda for extension of Sacramento Northern trail.

Working on environmental documentation for Dry Creek Parkway. Asking for American River Parkway access to any bridge built across the American River for Regional Transit's Downtown-Natomas-Airport light rail line.

**SACOG.** Establishing regional grant programs to allocate funding in Metropolitan Transportation Plan, including \$350 million in bicycle/pedestrian projects and \$500 million in community design projects.

**Orangevale Parks District.** Noted California Department of Parks and Recreation purchase of "breathtaking" Pershing Ravine which ties into easternmost Orangevale trail system.

**Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District.** Interested in producing new printed bike map.

**Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District.** Have brand new printed bike map. Will be awarding clean air funds grants.

## SABA Mission

*To make cycling in the Sacramento area safe, convenient and pleasant. To have more people cycling for transportation so we have healthy air, healthy citizens and healthy communities.*

SABA meets the fourth Tuesday of each month, usually at noon, but once every three months at 6:00 p.m. For more information call us at (916) 444-6600, or e-mail us at [bikesaba@pacbell.net](mailto:bikesaba@pacbell.net).

SABA's Folsom Chapter, the Folsom Area Bicycle Advocates (FABA), meets at 7:00 p.m. the third Thursday of the month. For more information call Chapter Chair Tony Powers at (916) 353-1745 or e-mail them at [faba@tomatoweb.com](mailto:faba@tomatoweb.com).

## The Squeaky Wheel

The newsletter is produced and distributed once each month. If you have an idea, a compliment, a tale of woe or an article for the newsletter, contact Lea Brooks, 2013 Roaring Camp Drive, Gold River 95670, via e-mail at [lea2skip@aol.com](mailto:lea2skip@aol.com), or call evenings at (916) 635-9332 by the third Thursday of each month.

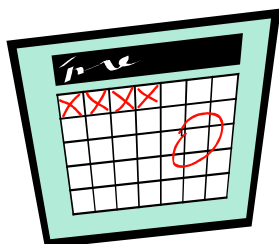
## SABA/Community Calendar

### December

21 Winter Solstice. Celebrate the days getting longer!

### January

- 11 Trail clean-up, 10 a.m., American River Parkway, Milepost 8
- 16 SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party, 5:30-7:30 p.m., SABA Pan-American HQ, 909 12<sup>th</sup> Street
- 21 Sacramento Riverfront Master Plan Community Workshop, 6:30 - 9:30 p.m., Embassy Suites Hotel in Old Sacramento
- 23 Sacramento City Council, 7 p.m. City Hall, Haggin Oaks Golf Course trail
- 28 SABA General Membership Meeting, evening potluck, 6-8:30 p.m.



## SABA General Membership Meeting

There is no General Membership meeting in December. Take the time to celebrate the holidays.



## SABActions

### Testimony

SABA testified to:

- The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) board on the amendment to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
- The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors on the South Watt Area Transportation Study and the Watt Avenue/Highway 50 interchange.

### Meetings

SABA members attended these meetings:

- Sacramento Transportation and Air Quality Collaborative plenary, environmental group and visioning sessions.
- SACOG Bicycle Pedestrian Committee.
- Sacramento River Corridor Floodway Planning Forum plenary and land-use sessions.
- California State Parks' Folsom Lake State Recreation Area General Plan update.
- Sacramento County's Bradshaw Road Center design charette.
- Sacramento Riverfront Master Plan.
- American Lung Association's Clean Air and Health Policy Committee.

### Letters

SABA sent letters to:

- *Sacramento Bee* on parking for Sacramento City College students.
- Folsom Historic District Commission on securing right-of-way for a trail behind Lake Natoma Inn.
- City of Folsom on its Bikeway Master Plan.
- Freeport Regional Water Authority on Regional Water Project.

### Other

- Landscaped the "20th Street Connector" trail.

*Chair, from page 1*

transportation, including transit, bicyclists and pedestrians. This multimodal approach is exciting and encouraging in that, to date, most projects have been designed first and foremost to accommodate motor vehicles. Bicyclists and pedestrians have been accommodated — if feasible.

SWATS has numerous challenges, including the fact that existing facilities are being retrofitted rather than designed from scratch. While the interchange is being reconfigured to accommodate more motor vehicles, separate north and southbound pathways will be constructed to allow bicyclists, pedestrians and disabled individuals to travel directly through the facility in both directions. The pathways will go under the on- and off-ramps and connect to the Watt Avenue Bridge over Highway 50.

Bicyclists should not underestimate the significance of the interchange's design and the county's bold decision. The design could become a model for interchanges nationwide. SABA has consistently criticized Sacramento County, the cities of Sacramento, Elk Grove and Folsom, and the California Department of Transportation for designing interchanges to accommodate motor vehicles at the expense of bicyclist and pedestrian safety and convenience. The city of Sacramento's interchange on Interstate 5 near Arco Arena and the city of Elk Grove's proposed interchange on Highway 99 at Grant Line Road provide glaring examples of elected officials and their staffs deliberately supporting facilities that only serve motor vehicles.

SABA has previously advocated separate bicycle and pedestrian freeway overcrossings, such as the facility over Highway 50 at Aerojet Road in Folsom. We may continue to support separate facilities in the future depending on the situation. But we recognize that separate overcrossings have inherent problems, including the inconvenience of pedaling or walking the extra distance to use the facilities.

So thank you Sacramento County supervisors and staff and your consultant, Greg Oslund of CH2M Hill, for listening to our concerns. Greg is an avid cyclist and took a personal interest in designing a project that incorporated rather than excluded bicyclists and pedestrians. We are thrilled! ☼

## SABA Pizza Party — Pizza, Soda and Doin' Stuff

The monthly SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party will be Thursday, January 16 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the SABA Pan-American HQ, 909 12<sup>th</sup> Street. Of course, we'll be writing letters, stuffing envelopes, eating pizza, and talking about bike stuff from a purely eclectic point of view!



## Legislature's Support for Bicycling Increases ... but Governor Davis Vetoes Key Bills

*by Chris Morfas*

The state Legislature was kind to bicyclists during 2002. Both the Assembly and Senate passed Senate Bill 1555 (Tom Torlakson), a strong bicycling promotion bill that would have made bad drivers pay for programs benefiting bicyclists and pedestrians. Governor Gray Davis, under pressure from AAA and receiving mixed messages from various elements within his administration, vetoed the bill. However, we believe the California Bicycle Coalition (CBC) can successfully address the governor's concerns in a new version of the bill.

The Legislature also passed Assembly Bill 2521 (Jay La Suer), which would have required all new or replaced traffic signals to detect bicycle traffic. Citing budgetary concerns, Davis also vetoed this bill. This is an issue that may be worked out administratively with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).

One legislative achievement not requiring the governor's approval was Assembly Concurrent Resolution 211 (Joe Nation). The Legislature approved this resolution that calls upon all cities and counties to install bike facilities as a routine part of most transportation projects. Send a copy to an elected official in your hometown (more details at [www.calbike.org](http://www.calbike.org)).

Proposition 51, which would have provided historic levels of funding for bike infrastructure and education, was soundly defeated by voters who were concerned about its impact on the state budget deficit and skeptical regarding provisions for developer-friendly projects set to receive a small percentage of the initiative's funding.

2003 is a new year that offers enormous potential. The federal transportation bill is being renewed and Caltrans reform is also moving forward. Thanks to the many SABA members who have supported CBC's efforts. ☼

*Chris Morfas is executive director of the California Bicycle Coalition.*

## Welcome new members!

Mike Erwin  
Don Forrester  
Tom Goodwin  
Ed Keller  
Michael Kenning  
Joe Mitchell  
Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op  
Brian Regan  
David Takacs  
Carol Thomas & Terry Tice  
Joanne Virone



## SABA Makes Trail Look Good

by Walt Seifert

SABA stalwarts planted, mulched and generally grubbed with gusto on November 9 after it looked like morning rain was going to last all day and cancel the fun. Fifty new native plants were tenderly placed in the inhospitably rocky ground at the 20<sup>th</sup> Street Connector, a bikeway that runs between the Blue Diamond factory and the Union Pacific (UP) railroad tracks and connects to the American River Parkway.

Two weeks later, SABA volunteers turned out again and planted another 45 plants. The stretch of trail from C Street to the UP railroad undercrossing is looking much neater and a little greener already, but the one-gallon plants have a lot of growing to do.

From the original landscaping done by the city of Sacramento nearly three years ago, three of four cork oaks had survived, along with a few Douglas iris. We replaced the dead oak tree with a very small sapling and added California native plants that should do well in this brutally sunny spot.

At the entrance, we planted flowering perennials (California fuchsia and yarrow), along with grasses (California fescue and deer grass). California wild roses went between the oak trees. Near the bridge, low-growing manzanita were placed in the narrow strip by the Blue Diamond fence. Wild lilac (*Ceanothus*) were planted on the slope by the railroad tracks.

SABA recently adopted this stretch of the Connector/Sacramento Northern bikeway through a Sacramento Tree Founda-

tion program funded by a Sierra Club grant. SABA has committed to maintaining the area for three years, so there will be future work parties to weed and clean up the area.

City of Sacramento Parks Department volunteer coordinator Randy Will has expressed great appreciation for SABA's efforts — already totaling more than 120 hours of labor.

SABA also hopes to install a "landmark" sign similar to the arched metal sign at Hornet Crossing. The sign would both identify the trail and recognize SABA's adoption. While we have received a generous \$250 donation from UP and the project budget included \$300 for signage, we are thousands of dollars short of the estimated \$5,000–7,000 needed for the sign. SABA and the city of Sacramento are looking at ways to reduce costs and raise more money.

Many thanks to John Whelan, Jim Miller, Ellen Crismer, Dwight Oda, David Azevedo, Ian Osser and wife Amanda, Peter Christensen, Maggie O'Mara, Beverly Taylor, Don Levy, Ed Cox, Tom Savage, homeless advocates Paula and Clifford and anyone else I missed. Special thanks to Steve Schweigerdt for picking up the plants and to Master Gardener Anita Clevenger for her plant research, selection and landscape design. All contributed to making Sacramento a better place and cycling a little more desirable.

If you are riding by and see any problems along the adopted bikeway segment, please let me know. ☺



SABA volunteer crew completes 20th St planting  
photo by Walt Seifert

## Sacramento Street Standards

The city of Sacramento is working on new street standards that will help cyclists and pedestrians. The proposed standards are designed to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and beautify neighborhoods. The proposed changes were prompted by national bicycle and pedestrian expert Dan Burden's presentation to the City Council in May.

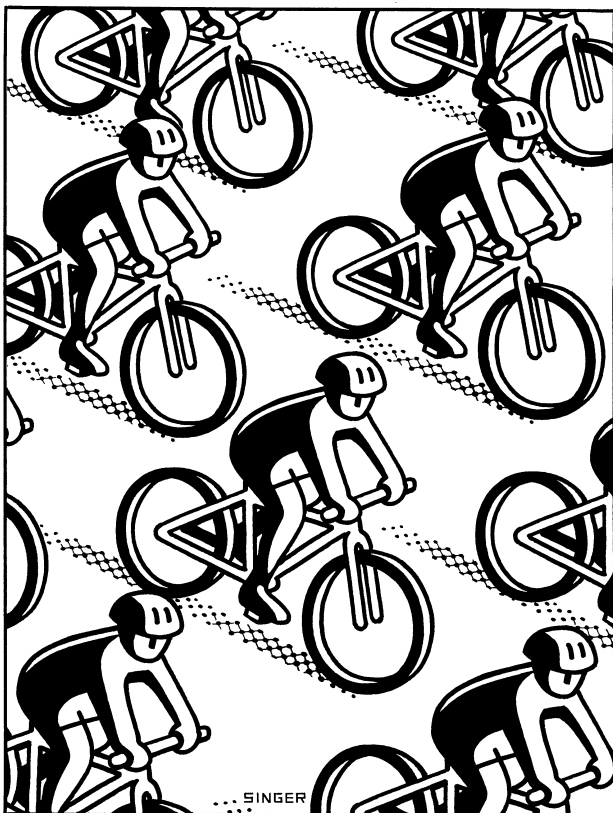
The standards will apply to new streets. They will make vertical curbs and planting strips mandatory, reduce traffic lane widths and increase bike lane widths.

At the November SABA meeting, members heard the city's Jesse Gothan describe some of the changes and the reasons for them. Elimination of rolled curbs will help prevent parked vehicles from blocking sidewalks and reduce traffic speeds. Planting strips will provide shade for cyclists and pedestrians. Bike lanes will go from five to six feet wide in most places. Near turn pockets, bike lanes will go from four to five feet wide.

SABA members asked that gutter pans be as narrow as possible so that the usable space for cyclists is as wide as possible. They also had questions and comments about pavement smoothness, locating underground utilities away from where cyclists ride (eliminating pavement cuts and patches near the curb), curb bulb-outs and pedestrian medians.

The proposed standards are slated to go to the Planning Commission this month and to the City Council for adoption in January.

In June of this year, also as a result of Burden's visit, the city adopted new standards for existing streets that were beneficial for cyclists and pedestrians. One change created the possibility of reducing motor vehicle travel lanes to 10 feet, with the pavement width gained being allocated to bike lanes or buffer lanes. ☼



## R Street Bridge to be Converted

The City of Sacramento received a state Bicycle Transportation Account grant totaling \$432,899, which combined with a local match of \$48,101, will be used to convert an existing bridge crossing over Interstate 5 from railroad operation to bicycle/pedestrian use. The bridge is owned by the California State Parks and Recreation department, which operates an excursion train along the Sacramento River west of the bridge. State Parks no longer uses this bridge, nor does it have any plans to use it for rail traffic.

The bridge has the potential to make critical commuter connections across Interstate 5 between R Street and the Sacramento River Bike Trail, which is planned for construction next year. Connections will also be made to the recently completed Waterfront Promenade, the recently constructed Embassy Suites Hotel, Old Sacramento and West Sacramento via the Tower Bridge. ☼



R Street Bridge over Interstate 5  
photo by Ed Cox

SACOG, from page 1

**Caltrans District 3.** Received a \$44,000 Partnership Planning grant for planning a cross-state bike route. Route would be combination of Class I trails and Class II bike lanes from Lake Tahoe to Bay Area. Anticipate route with forks, one up Highway 50 corridor and one in Interstate 80 corridor. Matching local funds are still needed and the lead agency is yet to be determined.

**El Dorado County.** Applied for two Community-based Transportation Planning Grants - one for the City of Placerville, the other for El Dorado County. The City grant is for development of a Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. The County Grant is for a Countywide Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan. It includes the 28 mile Sacramento — Placerville Transportation Corridor (SPTC) also known as "The El Dorado Trail." This trail, which would cross the county line south of Highway 50, could eventually connect to the City of Folsom and the American River Bike Trail. ☼

**SABA Business and Organization Members**

Business members with an \* offer SABA members a discount.

- Air Resources Board
- American Lung Association
- American River Bicycle\* (Folsom Blvd.)
- American River Bicycle\* (Marconi Ave.)
- American River Bicycle\* (Riverside Blvd.)
- American Warp Drive
- The Bicycle Business
- Bicycles Plus\*
- Bob's Cycle Center
- Body Concepts
- City Bicycle Works\*
- Davis Bike Club
- Downtown Sacramento Partnership
- Fehr & Peers Associates
- Franchise Tax Board
- Gary Brustin, LLP
- Gregorini & Associates
- Hannan Specialties
- The Hoyt Co.
- Inside Publications
- Judith Lamare, PhD
- Ken's Bike & Ski
- LambertWebWorks.com\*
- Natomas Bike Shop\*
- North Natomas TMA
- Power Inn BTA
- Regional Transit
- REI
- The Rest Stop\*
- Rex Cycles
- Sacramento Air Quality Management District
- Sacramento Bike Hikers
- Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op
- Sacramento TMA
- Sacramento Wheelmen
- Savoyard Bed & Breakfast\*
- Sierra Engineering
- SMUD
- South Natomas TMA
- UC Davis Transportation & Parking Services

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**Letters to the Editor**

We want to hear from *you!* Letters may be edited for length or clarity.

*Preferably* e-mail it to:

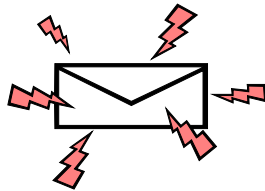
**bikesaba@pacbell.net**

or put it in an envelope to:

**SABA**

**P.O. Box 1295**

**Sacramento, CA 95812-1295**



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**SACOG Gets Bike Grant**

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) received a \$32,000 planning grant to study safe routes to transit.

The study will inventory all bicycle facilities within a one mile radius of all Sacramento Regional Transit light rail stations. The study will assess the adequacy of these facilities in providing safe and convenient access by bicycle from surrounding home and work locations to the light rail stations. Barriers or other features that limit access will be highlighted and possible improvements suggested.

The final product of this study will be a report that identifies by light rail station a set of facility improvements or new facilities that will improve bicycle access to the station. This includes an analysis of bike locker facilities at each station. ☼

**Want to be more Involved?**

SABA volunteers make the organization what it is. From reading the articles in this newsletter, you can probably see that there is no shortage of projects and issues that could benefit from *your* help. If you'd like to donate some of your time, whether it's writing for the newsletter or working on a project, let us know.

Current volunteer service opportunities are listed on the SABA Web site, [www.sacbike.org](http://www.sacbike.org). If you have a great idea for something that's not listed, but that you are interested in, talk to us! Call 444-6600 or e-mail [bikesaba@pacbell.net](mailto:bikesaba@pacbell.net). ☼

